

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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FOR SCS AND AF/C

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, RWE FOSSEY, DIAN)

SUBJECT: FOSSEY AND GORILLAS DISCUSSED AT PRESIDENCY

REF: STATE 015755

1. AS SOON AS REFTEL RECEIVED I ASKED AND WAS GIVEN APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENCE SEC GEN BUREGEYA TO PASS ON TO HIM DEPARTMENT'S CONCERNS FOR BOTH FOSSEY AND GORILLAS AND TO TRY OUT WITH HIM SOME IDEAS I HAD ON HOW EVERYONE'S ENERGIES MIGHT BE CHanneled INTO MORE CONSTRUCTIVE DIRECTIONS. BUREGEYA WAS RECEPTIVE AND SYMPATHETIC TO REFTEL CONCERNS AND ASKED ME TO CONVEY FOLLOWING TO BOTH DEPARTMENT AND FOSSEY:

A. GOR IS AT LEAST AS CONCERNED AS FOSSEY TOWARD PROTECTION AND PROPER MANAGEMENT OF GORILLAS. IT DEPLORES DIGIT'S DEATH AND INTENDS TO SEE THAT GUILTY PARTIES ARE APPREHENDED AND PUNISHED.

B. GOR CANNOT ACCEPT FOSSEY ASSERTION THAT DEATH PENALTY PT# FHA IT APPLIED AGAINST GORILLAS' KILLERS, NOR
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CAN GOR PERMIT FOSSEY TO TAKE LAW INTO HER OWN HANDS.

C. GOR ASKS THAT EMBASSY AND USG TAKE WHATEVER STEPS THEY CAN TO CALM FOSSEY AND DISCOURAGE HER FROM ACTIONS WHICH COULD OBLIGE GOR TO ASK HER LEAVE COUNTRY. THESE INCLUDE NOT ONLY REPRISALS AGAINST POACHERS BUT ALSO (HE IMPLIED) TENDENTIOUS OR UNTRUTHFUL PUBLICITY IN INTER-

NATIONSL PRESS.

2. I TOLD BUREGEKE HE COULD COUNT ON OUR ENERGETIC SUPPORT IN DISCOURAGING FOSSEY FROM TAKING EXTREME ACTIONS, NOTING MY WIFE INTENDED TO TRAVEL PERSONALLY TO HER CAMP THIS WEEK FOR PRECISELY THAT PURPOSE.

3. I ALSO SUGGESTED TO BUREGEYA THAT BEST WAY TO AVOID FURTHER DIFFICULTIES WOULD BE TO PERSUADE INTERESTED PARTIES TO COOPERATE IN POSITIVE CAMPAIGN TO INSURE GORILLAS' PROTECTION, RATHER THAN CONTINUING TO THROW STONES AT EACH OTHER. I SUGGESTED THAT PRESIDENCY MIGHT WISH TO CONVENE MEETING AMONG PERK OFFICIALS, RESEARCHERS, AND OTHER AIMED AT CLEARING AWAY MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND SETTLING UPON POSSIBLE "ACTION PLAN". I ADDED SUCH "ACTION PLAN" MIGHT EVEN CONTEMPLATE GOR'S HOSTING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF MOUNTAIN GORILLAS, WHOSE ULTIMATE AIM MIGHT BE ESTABLISH FUND FOR IMPROVEMENT OF PARK SERVICES AND FACILITIES (AS WELL AS GARNER ATTENTION FOR RWANDA'S POSITIVE EFFORTS).

4. BUREGEYA EXPRESSED SOME ENTHUSIASM FOR IDEA AND AGREED, AS FIRST STEP AT LEAST, TO CALL FOR MEETING OF INTERESTED EXPERTS HERE, UNDER AUSPICES OF NATIONAL TOURISM OFFICE, FOR MY PART, I PROMISED TO URGE FOSSEY TO COME DOWN FROM HER REMOTE CAMP AND TAKE PART IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROPOSED MEETING.

5. I ALSO MET WITH FOSSEY'S NEMESIS, BELGIAN ADVISER TO PARK SERVICE MONTFORT, WHO NATURALLY HAD HIS OWN STRONG VIEWS ABOUT FOSSEY AND GORILLAS. SAYING HE GREATLY RESPECTED FOSSEY FOR HER RESEARCH EFFORT LRNBLD#NEVERTHE- LESS BELIEVED SHE WAS WRONG IN ASSERTING THAT GORILLAS WERE BEING RAPIDLY KILLED OFF. TO CONTRARY, HE SAID, WHEREAS FIVE GORILLAS HAD BEEN KILLED IN 1976, ONLY ONE IS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN KILLED IN 1977 (DIGIT), ON OTHER HAND, HE SHARED FOSSEY'S CONCERN ON ENCROACHMENT OF CIVILIZATION AND LONGER TERM THREAT TO GORILLAS' SURVIVAL. HE NOTED ONE FED-BACKED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AIMED AT TAKING ONE-FOURTH OF PRESENT PARKLAND FOR CATTLE RAISING ACTIVITY.HE BELIEVED FOSSEY COULD RENDER ENORMOUS SERVICE BY JOINING HIM AND PARK SERVICE OFFICIALS IN COMBATTING THIS PROJECT. HE ALSO AGREED TO MEET WITH FOSSEY AND PARK SERVICE ON LONGER TERM "ACTION PLAN" AS WELL AS TO TRAVEL TO FOSSEY'S CAMP TO REASSURE HER HIS GOOD INTENTIONS.

6. COMMENT: WHILE RECEPTIVE AND SYMPATHETIC, BUREGEYA

DID NOT GIVE ME FULL STORY OF GOR CONCERN.I HAVE BEEN
RELIABLY INFORMED OTHERWISE THAT GOR IS PRESENTLY PRE-
PARING STERN LETTER TO FOSSEY, WARNING HER AGAINST FURTHER
FRASES AND UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY,AND I KNOW THAT THERE
ARE HIGHLY PLACED OFFICIALS LOBBYING FOR HER EXPULSION.
NEVERTHELESS, I BELIEVE WE CAN COUNT ON GOR DOING NOTHING
PRECIPITOUS WITHOUT FIRST ALERTING EMBASSY. MONTFORT,
DESPITE FOSSEY'S AVERSION TO HIM, SEEMS A POSITIVE AND
HELPFUL ELEMENT IN PICTURE, ONE I BELIEVE WHO WILL HELP
US IN KEEPING MATTERS IN PERSPECTIVE AND UNDER CONTROL. HE HAS
OFFERED TO ACCOMPANY MRS. CRIGLER ON HER TRIP TO FOSSEY'S CAMP
THIS WEEK.
CRIGLER

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